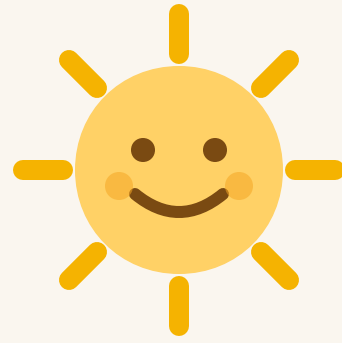


AI JOB SEARCH OS

Club Relaunch

Get back to work.



Offer Negotiation

AI Job Search OS · Workflow 5

Part of the AI Job Search OS kit



You got the offer. Take a breath — then don't accept it on the spot, no matter how relieved you feel. Almost every offer has room to move, and asking politely never costs you the job. This workflow helps you research what's realistic, decide what actually matters to you, and make your ask in writing.

This is an educational workflow, not career, legal, or financial advice. For anything involving contracts, equity, non-competes, or complicated benefits, talk to a qualified professional — this guide can't replace that.

Finish this and you'll have: a negotiation brief + an email script with your specific ask.

Inputs you need

- The offer details in writing: base salary, bonus (if any), start date, benefits summary, job title, reporting line.
- Your pay floor from Workflow 1 (the number you can't go below).
- 30 minutes for pay-range research.

Step 1 — Research realistic pay ranges (30 minutes)

You need to know the market before you ask for anything. Three sources:

1. **The posting itself** — many states now require pay ranges on postings. If the range was listed, that's your anchor.
2. **Salary sites** — look up the role title + city on two or three sites (Levels.fyi skews tech; for non-tech roles, sites like Glassdoor, Salary.com, or Payscale are more useful). Write down the range for someone with your years of experience.
3. **Your network** — if anyone in your outreach queue (Workflow 3) works in a similar role, it's fair to ask: "Would you be open to sharing the general range for roles like this at your company?"

Example — Maria's offer from Brightline Wellness:

Offer: \$72,000 base, 10% annual bonus target, standard benefits, title: Email Marketing Specialist, start date in 3 weeks. **Research:** posting listed \$70–85k. Salary sites show \$68–88k for email marketing specialists with 5+ years in LA/remote. Her pay floor is \$68,000. **Conclusion:** the offer is fair but low in the range. A realistic ask: \$78,000 base. Not greedy, backed by data.

Truthfulness note: use real numbers from real sources. Don't invent a competing offer you don't have — if they ask and you can't produce it, your credibility is gone.

Step 2 — Decide your priorities and trade-offs (15 minutes)

Money isn't the only lever. Rank what matters to you:

Maria's priorities: 1. Base salary — needs to clear \$75k to feel right about the move 2. Remote flexibility — already offered, just confirm it's in writing 3. Start date — she'd like 4 weeks instead of 3 to finish her SMS course 4. Title — "Senior" would be nice but she won't push hard for it

Willing to trade: a slightly lower bonus target for higher base; start date flexibility if they need her sooner.

Write yours the same way: ranked list, plus what you'd trade. This keeps you from freezing or rambling on the call — you know your top two asks and your walk-away line (your pay floor) before anyone picks up the phone.

Step 3 — Script the conversation (20 minutes)

You'll make the ask in writing (email), but they may want to talk first. Either way, use the same structure:

1. **Gratitude, specific:** "Thank you — I'm genuinely excited about the role and the team."
2. **The data, briefly:** "Based on my research for this role in this market, the range looks like \$X-\$Y for someone with my experience."
3. **The ask, specific:** "Would you be able to move the base to \$78,000?"
4. **The trade (optional):** "I'm flexible on the start date if that helps."
5. **Low pressure close:** "I want to make this work — let me know what you think."

Have the AI chat tool draft it from your brief:

Draft a salary negotiation email. My situation: [offer details]. My research: [range findings]. My ask: [specific number and any trade]. Tone: warm, professional, grateful, confident but not demanding. Under 200 words. Do not invent competing offers or ultimatums.

Then edit it in your own voice. Example of Maria's final email:

Subject: Re: Offer — Email Marketing Specialist

Hi [Name],

Thank you so much for the offer — I'm genuinely excited about the role and about joining the Brightline team.

Based on my research for email marketing specialist roles at my experience level in this market, the range looks like \$75,000–\$85,000. Would you be able to move the base to \$78,000? I'm flexible on the start date if an earlier start helps on your end.

I want to make this work and I'm looking forward to contributing to the subscription launch. Let me know what you think.

Best, Maria

Specific number. Polite. In writing. No ultimatum, no invented competing offer.

Step 4 — Practice, then send (15 minutes)

Read the email out loud once. Then read your script out loud once, in case they call instead of replying. Then send the email.

After you send it: wait. Don't follow up for at least 3 business days. Don't accept a counter on a live call — "Thank you, can I have until [day] to think it over?" is always an acceptable answer. Nothing gets accepted under pressure.

Privacy note: keep offer details between you and the employer. Don't post the numbers publicly or paste sensitive documents into AI tools beyond what's needed to draft — and never include account numbers, SSNs, or similar in anything you paste.

Step 5 — Evaluate the response (10 minutes)

When they reply, you'll get one of three outcomes:

- **Yes (or close):** Get the final terms in writing, then accept in writing. Done.
- **A counter:** Compare it to your priorities list. If it clears your must-haves, you can accept. One round of counter-asking is normal; two is fine; beyond that, decide based on your walk-away line.
- **No movement:** That's information too. If the final number still clears your pay floor and the role is right, it's okay to accept. If it doesn't clear your floor, it's okay to decline politely and keep searching — that's what the floor was for.

Whatever happens, log the outcome in your tracker and thank everyone who helped you along the way (a quick note to your referrals from Workflow 3 goes a long way).

Quality gate — check before moving on

- ☐ I researched the pay range from at least two real sources (not just one site, not just a guess).
- ☐ My priorities are ranked in writing, and I know my walk-away line (pay floor).
- ☐ My ask is specific (a number), polite, and going out in writing — no verbal-only negotiation.
- ☐ Nothing will be accepted on the spot or under pressure; I have my "let me think it over" line ready.
- ☐ I have not invented a competing offer or any other leverage I don't actually have.

Output

- **Negotiation brief** — offer details, research findings, ranked priorities, walk-away line, specific ask.
- **Email script** — the actual message, reviewed and ready to send.

And that's the full system: target, tailor, reach out, interview, negotiate. When the next search starts — and careers have chapters — you'll know exactly where to begin. Get back to work.